

The Eight Covenants of the Bible

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Ariel Ministries' Messianic Bible Study # 021:

THE EIGHT COVENANTS OF THE BIBLE

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Part 1: The Edenic, Adamic, Noahic and Abrahamic Covenants

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Now Jehovah said unto Abram, Get you out of your country, and from your kindred, and from your father's house, unto the land that I will show you: and I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and be you a blessing: and I will bless them that bless you, and him that curses you will I curse: and in you shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

- Genesis 12:1-3 -

INTRODUCTION

Since much of God's relationship to man is based upon covenantal relationships, a study of the eight covenants is a very important aspect of correctly understanding Scripture. The most common way to divide the Bible is by Dispensations. The dispensations, however, are based upon specific covenants, and knowledge of these covenants will help Bible readers to “rightly divide the word of truth” (II Tim. 2:15). Although the dispensations may come to an end, the covenants themselves often continue.

A. The Types of Covenants

There are two types of covenants in the Bible: conditional and unconditional. It is important to distinguish between these two types of covenants in order to have a clear picture of what the Bible teaches.

1. Conditional Covenants

A conditional covenant is a bilateral covenant in which a proposal of God to man is characterized by the formula: if you will, then I will, whereby God promises to grant special blessings to man providing man fulfills certain conditions contained in the covenant. Man's failure to do so often results in punishment. Thus one's response to the covenant agreement brings either blessings or cursings. The blessings are secured by obedience and man must meet his conditions before God will meet His.

Two of the eight covenants of the Bible are conditional: the Edenic Covenant and the Mosaic Covenant.

2. Unconditional Covenants

An unconditional covenant is a unilateral covenant and is a sovereign act of God whereby He unconditionally obligates Himself to bring to pass definite blessings and conditions for the covenanted people. This covenant is characterized by the formula: I will, which declares God's determination to do as He promises. Blessings are secured by the grace of God. There may be conditions in the covenant by which God requests the covenanted one to fulfill out of gratitude, but they are not themselves the basis of God's fulfilling His promises.

Six of the eight covenants are unconditional: the Adamic Covenant, the Noahic Covenant, the Abrahamic Covenant, the Palestinian or Land Covenant, the Davidic Covenant, and the New Covenant.

B. The Covenants with Israel

Five of these eight covenants were made exclusively with Israel while the others were made with mankind in general. Only one of the five covenants made with Israel is conditional: the Mosaic Covenant. The other four covenants with Israel are all unconditional: the Abrahamic Covenant, the Land Covenant, the Davidic Covenant, and the New Covenant.

Four things should be noted concerning the nature of the unconditional covenants made with Israel.

First: they are literal covenants and their contents must be interpreted literally as well.

Second: the covenants that God has made with Israel are eternal and are not in any way restricted or altered by time.

Third: it is necessary to re-emphasize that these are unconditional covenants that were not abrogated because of Israel's disobedience; because the covenants are unconditional and totally dependent upon God for fulfillment, their ultimate fulfillment can be expected.

Fourth: these covenants were made with a specific people: Israel. This point is brought out by Paul in Romans 9:4: *who are Israelites; whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises.*

This passage clearly points out that these covenants were made with the covenanted people and are Israel's possession.

This is brought out again in Ephesians 2:11-12: *Wherefore remember, that once ye, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called Circumcision, in the flesh, made by hands; that ye were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world.*

Five of the eight Bible covenants belong to the people of Israel and, as this passage notes, Gentiles were considered *strangers from the covenants*.

C. The Principle of the Timing of the Provisions

A covenant can be signed, sealed, and made a specific point of history, but this does not mean that all the provisions go immediately into effect. In fact, three

different things happen once a covenant is sealed: first, some go into effect right away; second, some provisions go into effect in the near future, which may be twenty five years away or five hundred years away; and third, some provisions go into effect only in the distant prophetic future, not having been fulfilled to this day.

Part 1: The Edenic, Adamic, Noahic and Abrahamic Covenants

I. THE EDENIC COVENANT

A. Scripture:

Genesis 1:28-30:

And God blessed them: and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth. And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb yielding seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food: and to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the heavens, and to everything that creeps upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for food: and it was so.

Genesis 2:15-17:

And Jehovah God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And Jehovah God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat of it: for in the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die.

Hosea 6:7:

But they like Adam have transgressed the covenant: there have they dealt treacherously against me.

B. The Participants in the Covenant

The Edenic Covenant was made between God and Adam in which Adam stood as the representative head of the human race. Thus the actions of Adam are attributed to the whole of humanity.

C. The Provisions of the Covenant

All together, there were a total of seven provisions in the Edenic Covenant.

First: man was told: *Be fruitful, and multiply and replenish the earth* (Gen. 1:28a).

The earth was created for the purpose of being the habitation of man, and then man was created on the sixth day. Man was told to populate the earth; so the increase in population is part of his commission. The earth was to be filled with humanity.

Second: man was told to *subdue* the earth (Gen. 1:28b). Previously, authority over the earth had been given to Satan (Ezek. 28:11-19). But when Satan fell, he lost his authority over this earth. That is the reason Genesis 1:2 describes the earth as being covered by water and *darkness* being over *the face of the deep*. Hence, God began to form and fashion the earth anew to make it habitable for man, and this time He would give man the authority over the earth. Man was to *subdue* it; he was to use the natural resources and energies of the earth that God had provided for him. However, this did not mean he was allowed to pollute it!

Third: man was given *dominion* over all living things (Gen.1:28c). The earlier provision gave man authority over the earth as far as non-living things were concerned. This provision extended man's authority over all living creatures. The entire animal kingdom on the earth, in the air, and in the sea was put under the authority of man. The first exercise of this authority was man's naming of the animals (Gen. 2:19-20).

The fourth provision concerned man's diet (Gen. 1:29-30; 2:16). At this point man was to be a vegetarian. There is nothing in this covenant that allowed him to eat of the animal kingdom although he was to exercise authority over it. No blood of any kind was to be shed.

A fifth provision directed man *to dress and to keep* the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:15). Even in his unfallen state, man was not to lead a life of pure leisure; work was part of the human ethic even before the Fall. However, labor was easy and the land would produce easily; it was not toilsome.

The sixth provision was that man was forbidden to eat of *the tree of the knowledge of good and evil* (Gen. 2:17a). This was the only negative commandment in the entire Edenic Covenant and was the one point that would test man's obedience. He was free to eat of all the other trees of the garden but was to refrain from eating of that one. This was the one test to see how man would respond to the will of God; it was a test of the recognition of and the submission to the will of God. Man was not to assume that, because he was given authority over the earth and the animal kingdom, he himself was independent of God and exempt from God's law. The

question that raises is, “Will man, like Satan before him, reject God's right to rule and declare himself independent of God?”

The seventh provision contained a penalty for disobedience: spiritual death (Gen. 2:17b). This cannot refer to physical death because man did not die on the very day that he disobeyed the commandment. So the death spoken of here must be spiritual death. In the day that he eats of *the tree of the knowledge of good and evil*, he will be separated from God and will die spiritually.

D. The Status of the Covenant

The Edenic Covenant was the basis for the Dispensation of Innocence. The record of the Edenic Covenant's being broken is found in Genesis 3:1-8.

Satan appeared in the Garden of Eden as a fallen creature. This shows that man was not created in a perfect universe, for sin was already in existence. Although it was not yet existent in man, it was already present in Satan. The devil did his work of tempting man in the same three areas as set forth in I John 2:16.

The first phrase of Genesis 3:6: *And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food*, corresponds to the first phrase of I John 2:16: *the lust of the flesh*. The second phrase of Genesis 3:6: *and that it was a delight to the eyes*, corresponds to the second phrase of I John 2:16: *the lust of the eyes*. And the third phrase of Genesis 3:6:

and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, corresponds to the second phrase of I John 2:16: *and the vainglory [pride] of life*.

Eve gave in to the temptation and disobeyed the one negative commandment. Adam recognized what had happened, but he still chose to join his wife in disobedience. Their first reaction was an attempt to hide from the presence of God, which only illustrated the truth of Genesis 2:17. Man at that very moment died spiritually and could no longer share the same communion with God he had experienced before his disobedience. With that act, the Edenic Covenant, being conditional, came to an end.

II. THE ADAMIC COVENANT

A. Scripture:

Genesis 3:14-19

And Jehovah God said unto the serpent, Because you have done this, cursed are you above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon your belly shall you go, and dust shall you eat all the days of your life: and I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed: he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel. Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply your pain and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children; and your desire shall be to your husband, and he shall rule over you. And unto Adam he said, Because you have hearkened unto the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree, of which I commanded you, saying, You shall not eat of it: cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil shall you eat of it all the days of your life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to you; and you shall eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of your face shall you eat bread, till you return unto the ground; for out of it were you taken: for dust you are, and unto dust shall you return.

B. The Participants in the Covenant

God and Adam are involved in this covenant in which Adam again represented the whole human race. Thus the judgment on Adam is the judgment on all humanity.

C. The Provisions of the Covenant

God individually addressed the serpent, Satan, Eve, and Adam.

1. The Serpent: Genesis 3:14

There are three provisions concerning the serpent.

First: he is cursed above all other creatures of the animal kingdom. All creatures now fall under a curse, but there is a special curse upon this one member of the animal kingdom. Normally, an animal is not held morally responsible for its actions. However, if it causes any harm to man, then it is held responsible (Gen. 9:5). Animals were created for the benefit of man, and when this principle is violated, it then incurs the judgment of God.

Second: the serpent is to crawl on its belly. This shows that originally the serpent moved in an erect position. This led to the debate whether or not the serpent originally had legs, but that question is irrelevant to the issue. The only point is that in place of moving erectly, the serpent now crawls on its belly.

Third: dust shall be the serpent's food. Bible critics have had a field day with this pointing it out as an error of the Bible since reptiles do not eat dust. However, this was simply a Hebrew idiom meaning to be especially cursed (Mic. 7:17). The curse will continue to be there even in the Messianic Kingdom (Is. 65:25).

2. Satan: Genesis 3:15

Four provisions are given in relationship to Satan.

First: there would be perpetual hatred between Satan and the woman.

Second: this hatred was to culminate between Satan's seed, the Antichrist, and the woman's Seed, the Messiah.

Third: the serpent would bruise the heel of the woman's Seed; this happened at the Crucifixion.

Fourth: this first prophecy of the Lord's victory over Satan goes on to say that the woman's Seed will crush Satan's head; this occurred initially with the Resurrection (Heb. 2:14-15). But the final crushing of Satan was still future when Paul wrote Romans 16:20; it will come when Satan is cast into the Lake of fire (Rev. 20:10).

The main point of this prophecy is that the Messiah would be of the Seed of woman. This goes against the biblical norm that teaches that genealogy is traced through the male line, not through the female line. The reason for this exception will not be known for centuries until Isaiah 7:14 revealed that the Messiah will be conceived and born of a virgin. The prophecy of Genesis 3:15 led to the events of Genesis 6:1-4 when Satan tried to corrupt the seed of the woman and will lead to the future supernatural conception of the Antichrist.

3. The Woman: Genesis 3:16

Eve and all women were made subject to three provisions.

First: there would be multiplication of menstrual pain and conception. Apparently, the nature of conception before the Fall was quite different than what it was after the Fall. Since the Fall, a woman generally is able to conceive at least once a month. Furthermore, a woman's menstrual periods are accompanied with discomfort and pain.

Second: the woman was to give birth in pain. Before the Fall, she would have been able to conceive and give birth without pain, but this was no longer true. However, once birth takes place, there is joy (Jn. 16:21). In this way, the woman is saved (I Tim. 2:15). She is not spiritually saved through childbirth, but she is saved from being in a demeaning position through her ability to produce children, for in this way she guarantees the continuity of the human race not subject to physical death.

Third: the wife was to be in subjection to the husband. This was already true before the Fall, but the new element was that she would now have a desire to rebel against that subjection and choose to try to rule him.

4. The Man: Genesis 3:17-19

Adam and all men and the entire human race were subjected to five provisions in Genesis 3:17-19.

First: since Adam stands as the representative head of the human race, the judgment on Adam is the judgment on the whole human race. It is Adam, not Eve, who is held responsible for the human condition.

Second: the earth was cursed. Working was not something new with the Adamic Covenant, it had already been provided for in the Edenic Covenant. The difference was in the earth's response. Under the Edenic Covenant, the earth was to respond readily to man's working and tilling. But now the earth would not respond so easily; there would be *thorns, thistles*, and weeds.

Third: human diet continues to be vegetarian as it was under the Edenic Covenant; it is not clear if the same was true for the animal kingdom. Animals were used for dairy products, wool for clothing, and sacrifices, but not for eating.

Fourth: man's work was to be characterized by hard labor. Working conditions under the Edenic Covenant were easy, simple, and enjoyable. Now, *sweat* was to characterize the work of man and labor was to be hard and toilsome.

Fifth: physical death was introduced. Whereas under the Edenic Covenant man died spiritually, under the Adamic Covenant man would ultimately die physically (Rom. 5:12-21). Thus far there have only been two exceptions to this rule: Enoch and Elijah. There will be others in the future at the time of the Rapture.

D. The Status of the Covenant

The Adamic Covenant became the basis for the Dispensation of Conscience. As an unconditional covenant, it is very much in effect today.

III. THE NOAHIC COVENANT

A. Scripture:

Genesis 9:1-17

And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply,

and replenish the earth. And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every bird of the heavens; with all wherewith the ground teems, and all the fishes of the sea, into your hand are they delivered. Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you; as the green herb have I given you all. But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat. And surely your blood, the blood of your lives, will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it: and at the hand of man, even at the hand of every man's brother, will I require the life of man. Whoso sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man. And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein. And God spoke unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you; of all that go out of the ark, even every beast of the earth. And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of the flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud, and I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth.

B. The Participants in the Covenant

This covenant was made between God and Noah. Like Adam, Noah stood as the representative for the entire human race. As a result of the flood, not only is all humanity descended from Adam, but also from Noah.

C. The Provisions of the Covenant

First: man was to repopulate the earth (vv. 1, 7). With the exception of eight people, the entire human race was destroyed by the Flood. Man had vastly increased in numbers, but *the wickedness of man was great in the earth* (Gen. 6:5). Thus God brought universal judgment upon the earth. After the Flood, the earth was essentially empty again. Only eight people remained to repopulate the entire earth. Just as with the Edenic Covenant, man was again commissioned to

repopulate the earth, but the command to subdue the earth is not repeated. With man's fall, he lost his authority and Satan usurped it. Thus Satan is *the prince of this world* (Jn. 12:31) and *the god of this world* (II Cor. 4:4). Satan has authority over all the kingdoms of this world and can offer them to whomsoever he will (Lk. 4:6). He made that offer to the Seed of the woman, Yeshua (Jesus), who turned it down. He will offer it some day to the seed of Satan, the Antichrist, who will accept it (Rev. 13:1-3).

Second: the fear of man was put into animals and man was to dominate them (v. 2). While man had lost authority over the earth, he was still to dominate and have authority over the animal kingdom. For this reason, the fear of man was placed in animals. This fear was a means of self preservation due to the next provision.

Third: man's diet was to consist of both *every moving thing* and *the green herb* (v. 3). Previously, his diet had been vegetarian, but now all animals were included. No limitations whatsoever are given in the passage, thus all animals were fit for food.

Fourth: man was forbidden to eat blood (v. 4). All creature life, both man and animal, is blood sustained. Blood is the symbol of life, and the shedding of blood is the symbol of death. Because blood is the symbol of life, God commanded that it not be eaten or drunk.

Fifth: capital punishment became a part of the human economy for the first time in (vv. 5-6). When Cain killed Abel, Cain was not executed because capital punishment had not yet been instituted. The provision for capital punishment came with the Noahic Covenant and all murderers were to be executed.

Sixth: the promise of the covenant is that humanity would never again be destroyed by a world wide flood (vv. 8-11). While there would be local floods that would destroy portions of humanity, never again would there be a world wide flood. In the future, there will be a passing away and destruction of earth's present system, but it will not be by means of a universal flood. This shows that the Noahic Flood was universal, not local.

Seventh: the token of the covenant was the rainbow (vv. 12-17). Not every covenant came with a sign or token, but this one did. This was the first time in human history that the rainbow ever appeared. Rain did not exist before the world wide flood and the earth was watered by a mist that came daily upon the vegetation. Rainbows come in conjunction with rain. So for the first time in human experience the rainbow appeared, and God's promise that humanity will not be

destroyed by a flood again should come to remembrance every time a rainbow is seen.

D. The Status of the Covenant

The Noahic Covenant became the basis for the Dispensation of Human Government. Although this dispensation has been superseded, the unconditional Noahic Covenant is still very much in effect. The judgments of the Tribulation against the Gentiles will come because of violations of the Noahic Covenant. According to Isaiah 24:5-6, the judgment comes because humanity has violated *the everlasting covenant*, a name given to the Noahic Covenant in Genesis 9:16. For that reason, the prophet used the Noahic Flood motif, *the windows on high* and *foundations of the earth* in Isaiah 24:18. But next time, God will destroy the masses of humanity by fire.

IV. THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

A. Scripture

First: **Genesis 12:1-3:** *Now Jehovah said unto Abram, Get you out of your country, and from your kindred, and from your father's house, unto the land that I will show you: and I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and be you a blessing: and I will bless them that bless you, and him that curses you will I curse: and in you shall all the families of the earth be blessed.*

Second: **Genesis 12:7:** *And Jehovah appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto your seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto Jehovah, who appeared unto him.*

Third: **Genesis 13:14-17:** *And Jehovah said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now your eyes, and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward: for all the land which you see, to you will I give it, and to your seed for ever. And I will make your seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then may your seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for unto you will I give it.*

The fourth and fifth passages dealing with the Abrahamic Covenant are **Genesis 15:1-21** and **Genesis 17:1-21**. While not quoted in this study, these more lengthy segments of Scripture contain many provisions of the Abrahamic Covenant. The emphasis of Genesis 15 is threefold: first, Abraham would father one nation in

particular; second, he would father many nations in general; third, God signs and seals the Abrahamic Covenant and spells out the exact borders of the Abrahamic Covenant as extending from *the river of Egypt* in the south to *the great river*, Euphrates in the north. The signing was done in such a way that it rendered the covenant unconditional. The emphasis of Genesis 17 is on the token of the covenant: physical circumcision on the eighth day of a boy's life. Just as the rainbow was the token of the Noahic Covenant, so circumcision is the token of the Abrahamic Covenant.

A sixth passage is **Genesis 22:15-18:**

And the angel of Jehovah called unto Abraham a second time out of heaven, and said, By myself have I sworn, says Jehovah, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son, that in blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and your seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because you have obeyed my voice.

B. The Participants in the Covenant

God and Abraham are involved in this covenant, in which Abraham stood as the representative head of the whole Jewish nation, not for all humanity.

C. The Provisions of the Covenant

A list gleaned from these passages shows a total of fourteen provisions in this covenant.

First: *a great nation* was to come out of Abraham, namely, the nation of Israel (Gen. 12:2; 13:16; 15:5; 17:1-2, 7; 22:17b).

Second: he was promised a Land; specifically, the land of Canaan (Gen. 12:1, 7; 13:14-15, 17; 15:17-21; 17:8).

Third: Abraham himself was to be greatly blessed (Gen. 12:2b).

Fourth: Abraham's name would be great (Gen. 12:2c).

Fifth: Abraham will be a blessing to others (Gen. 12:2d).

Sixth: those who bless Israel will be blessed (Gen. 12:3a).

Seventh: those who curse Israel will be cursed (Gen. 12:3b).

Eighth: in Abraham all will ultimately be blessed (Gen. 12:3c; 22:18).

Ninth: Abraham would receive a son through his wife Sarah (Gen. 15:1-4; 17:16-21).

Tenth: his descendants would undergo the Egyptian bondage (Gen. 15:13-14).

Eleventh: other nations as well as Israel would come forth from Abraham (Gen. 17:3-4, 6); the Arab states are some of these nations.

Twelfth: his name was to be changed from *Abram*, meaning “exalted father,” to *Abraham*, meaning “father of a multitude” (Gen. 17:5).

Thirteenth: *Sarai's* name, meaning “my princess,” was to be changed to *Sarah*, meaning “the princess” (Gen. 17:15).

Fourteenth: circumcision was to be a token of the covenant (Gen. 17:9-14); thus, according to the Abrahamic Covenant, circumcision was to be a sign of one's Jewishness. The practice of circumcision did not begin with Abraham since others in the ancient Near East practiced the ritual either at birth or puberty. The uniqueness of Jewish circumcision is not the act, but the timing of the act: on the eighth day. Circumcision would show this to be a blood covenant and hence emphasized its solemnity. It would also show that this sign of Jewishness is passed on through natural generation.

These provisions of the Abrahamic Covenant can be categorized in three areas: to Abraham; to the Seed, Israel; and to the Gentiles.

1. To Abraham

Abraham was to be the father of a great nation, Israel. He was to possess all of the Promised Land. Other nations, including the Arab states, were ultimately to descend from Abraham. Many of his descendants would become kings, both Jewish and non-Jewish kings. Abraham was to receive personal blessings. Abraham was to be a blessing to others. His name was to become great, and so it is among Jews, Moslems, and in all Christendom.

2. To the Seed: Israel

The nation of Israel was to become great. It was ultimately to become innumerable. It was to possess all of the Promised Land. It was to receive victory over its enemies. The fact that the promises were made to both Abraham and his seed shows that these blessings have not yet received complete fulfillment but

await the Messianic Kingdom.

3. To the Gentiles

The Gentiles would be blessed for blessing Israel and cursed for cursing Israel. Also, they were to receive spiritual blessings, but ultimately these were to come through one specific Seed of Abraham, the Messiah. The Abrahamic Covenant contains both physical and spiritual promises. While the physical blessings were limited to the Jews only, the spiritual blessings were to extend to the Gentiles, but only through the Messiah.

D. The Basis for Development of Other Covenants

Reducing the Abrahamic Covenant to its very basics, it can be seen that it contained three aspects: the Land aspect, the Seed aspect, and the Blessing aspect. The Land aspect is developed in the Land Covenant. The Seed aspect is covered in the Davidic Covenant. The Blessing aspect is presented in the New Covenant.

E. The Confirmation of the Covenant

1. Confirmation Through Isaac

Abraham had eight sons by three different women, and the question arose: through which son would the Abrahamic Covenant be confirmed? God revealed that it was to be only through Sarah's son, Isaac. God's appearance to Isaac is recorded in Genesis 26:2-5: *And Jehovah appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell you of: sojourn in this land, and I will be with you, and will bless you; for unto you, and unto your seed, I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore unto Abraham your father: and I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and will give unto your seed all these lands; and in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.*

The covenant was later reconfirmed to Isaac in Genesis 26:24: *And Jehovah appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham your father: fear not, for I am with you, and will bless you, and multiply your seed for my servant Abraham's sake.*

2. Confirmation Through Jacob

Isaac had two sons, and God chose to confirm the covenant with Jacob, as seen in Genesis 28:13-15: *And, behold, Jehovah stood above it, and said, I am Jehovah, the God of Abraham your father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon you lie, to you*

will I give it, and to your seed; and your seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in you and in your seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with you, and will keep you whithersoever you go, and will bring you again into this land; for I will not leave you, until I have done that which I have spoken to you of.

3. Confirmation Through the Sons of Jacob

Next, it was confirmed through all of Jacob's twelve sons (Gen. 49), who fathered the Twelve Tribes of Israel.

F. The Status of the Covenant

The Abrahamic Covenant became the basis for the Dispensation of Promise. Because the Abrahamic Covenant is unconditional, it is still very much in effect even though it has remained largely unfulfilled. The ultimate fulfillment will come during the Kingdom Age. Some examples of this include: Exodus 2:23-25; 4:24-26; 6:2-8; 32:11-14; Leviticus 26:46; Deuteronomy 34:4; II Kings 13:22-23; I Chronicles 16:15-19; II Chronicles 20:7-8; Nehemiah 9:7-8; Psalm 105:7-12; Luke 1:54-55, 68-73; Galatians 3:15-18; and Hebrews 6:13-20. These verses note that the Abrahamic Covenant was the basis for the Exodus, for giving them the Land, for Jewish survival in spite of disobedience, for the coming of the Messiah, for the resurrection of the dead, and for Israel's final redemption and restoration.

The Abrahamic Covenant is a good example of what was stated earlier: that a covenant could be signed and sealed at a specific point of time, but not every provision goes immediately into effect, but rather, three different things happen. Some went into effect right away such as the change of names and circumcision. Some went into effect in the near future, for there was a twenty-five year wait for the birth of Isaac and a four hundred year wait before the conquest of the Land. Some provisions go into effect in the prophetic distant future such as the settlement of all of the Promised Land, which has not been fulfilled to this day.

- The remaining four covenants will be covered in subsequent Shofars. -

If you enjoyed this Bible study, Dr. Fruchtenbaum recommends these Messianic Bible Studies, which may be obtained from [Ariel Ministries](#):

mbs 030 The Nature of the Bible

mbs 034 The Bible and Divine Revelation

mbs 037 The Inspiration of the Scriptures

mbs 041 The Dispensations of God. "Dispensations" goes hand in hand with "The Eight Covenants of the

Bible," and may also be accessed at "[The Dispensations of God](#)" in Shofar 16.

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